

in Karnataka, albeit on the boundary of Karnataka and Goa. The second sighting was at Dudhsagar (alt. about 800 m), which is well within the Goa region. These hills of Goa have luxuriant evergreen forests, a typical habitat for laughing thrushes. The region does not seem to have the well-known food plants of these birds: 1) brambles (*Rubus* sp.), and 2) hill guava (*Rhodomyrtus tomentosa* Wt.), but the other known associated plants: 1) atki (*Masea indica* Wall.), 2) gol (*Trema orientalis* Blume) and 3) bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) are quite common. Out of these the fruits of *Maesa indica* and *Trema orientalis* are definitely consumed by laughing thrushes, but the association of the birds with bracken (*Pteridium aquili-*

num) may be related to the fact that the plant contains insect moulting hormones. This may increase the likelihood of finding insects in the vicinity of the plant.

Garrulax jerdoni has been previously recorded in the hills of Kerala and Western Tamilnadu north of the Achankovil Gap (c. 9°N. lat.); Cardamom, Kannan Devan and Palni hills, and High Wavy Mountains; from c. 1200 m to the summits. This observation confirms the occurrence of the bird also in the Goa region.

I am grateful to Mr Marcelin Almeida who helped in the identification of plants and supplied much useful information about the forests of the region.

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15. A NEW RECORD OF SUNBIRDS AS AVIAN PESTS ON GRAPE AROUND HYDERABAD

Around Hyderabad, grape is grown in about 1000 ha. It is one of the important fruit crops and is being occasionally damaged by many species of birds causing heavy loss to the grape growers.

Perumal *et al.* (1972) recorded three species of birds visiting grape gardens in Tamil Nadu. Toor and Ramzan (1974) recorded ten species of birds causing damage to grapes in Punjab. During the survey of bird pests of grapes in February to March, 1981, we recorded 22 species of birds visiting grape orchards around Hyderabad. Among them 15 species were beneficial and 7 species harmful to the ripening berries.

Among the harmful birds two species of

Sunbirds, namely Purple Sunbird, *Nectarinia asiatica* Linnaeus, and Purplerumped Sunbird *Nectarinia zeylonica* Latham, are recorded for the first time, as new avian pests damaging ripening grape berries, in grape gardens around Hyderabad. These birds pierce and puncture the berries and suck the juice making them unfit for human consumption.

The extent of damage caused by these birds was assessed in two gardens — one in Grape Research Station, Andhra Pradesh Agricultural University, Rajendranagar and another in a private orchard nearby. In these gardens 50 bunches of Anab-e-Shahi variety were examined at random to estimate the extent of damage by these birds. In each bunch, the total num-

ber of berries present and number of berries damaged by these birds were recorded. The percentage of damage ranged between 3.2 and 45. The percentage of damage was found to

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be more in bunches in the periphery of the garden as compared to those in the interior of the garden.

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16. SOME NOTES ON THE REPTILES OF THE ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS

The snakes of the Andaman and Nicobar islands are fairly well covered by Smith's FAUNA OF BRITISH INDIA, Volume 3(1943), but the lizards have received less attention. In recent years, the Zoological Survey of India has arranged several collecting trips to various islands in that group and a paper on the last trip, which included Mr Humayun Abdulali, has already been published (Biswas & Sanyal 1980). Over the same period, Mr Abdulali, though primarily interested in birds, has also made small collections of reptiles for the Bombay Natural History Society in the course of his several trips. The present notes refer mainly to the specimens collected during his last trip to the Andamans and Nicobars in March/

April 1976, which I have had the opportunity of examining¹. The earlier specimens referred to were identified at the Bombay Natural History Society and the notes other than taxonomic are by Mr. Abdulali. Another small collection of Dr K. K. Tiwari collected in 1977 from Andaman and Nicobar has been also examined.

The first figure is the serial number in Smith's FAUNA OF BRITISH INDIA and the volume and page number are also quoted. The measurements are in millimetres.

FAMILY Emydidae

9. *Cuora amboinensis* (Daudin) (Type: island of Amboyna). Malay Box-tortoise Smith 1 : 84.

1 ex. Car Nicobar

Collector's No. CN 34. Carapace length 48, breadth 42, plastron length 41.

¹ The delay in submission is due to Mr Abdulali's inability to examine the earlier material collected by him and to include it here — Author's note at the instance of Mr Abdulali.